133

STORY OF A QUEEN.

First Edition—3,000 Copies,

MADRAS:

M. R. T. & B. SOCIETY.

1874.

No. 12. *One Pie.*

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Several hundred miles to the north-west of the country in which we live, there is a large country, called Persia. More than two thousand years ago, the King of Persia was the most powerful monarch in the world. He ruled over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, inhabited by many nations, speaking different languages. Among the nations subject to him were the Jews, worshippers of the one true God.

The prime minister of the King of Persia was a proud, wicked and cruel man. Every time that he passed the gate of the palace, the servants bowed to him and did him reverence. But one good man, a Jew, refused to do as the others did, for the prime minister wished to be honoured more like a God than a man. The conduct of the Jew made the prime minister very angry, and he sought to revenge himself upon the whole Jewish people. Men, women, and little children, were all to be killed because the Jew who sat in the palace gate did not bow to him.

The prime minister went to the king. He told him that the Jews were very bad people, and offered to pay as much as two crores of rupees, if the king would command them all to be put to death on a certain day. The king agreed to this, and orders, under the royal seal, were sent to the rulers of provinces. The prime minister was glad, and thought he should soon be revenged.

But the wicked man did not know that the Queen was a Jewess, and that the Jew who sat in the king's gate was her uncle. The Queen soon heard about the

cruel order; and she said she would go in before the King and ask him to spare her nation.

It was a law of the country, that no one, not even the Queen, should come before the King except he was called. Whoever entered the King's presence without being sent for, was to be put to death, unless the King held out his golden sceptre. The Queen knew this, but she loved her people more than she loved her life, and she said, "I will go, and if I perish, I perish."

But there is another King, far greater than the King of Persia,

whose help she asked first. She prayed to God, who could, if He pleased, make her husband kind and merciful. Then she put on her royal robes, and went into the presence of the King.

The King was sitting upon his throne in the palace. As soon as he saw the Queen standing humbly in the inner court, he held out his golden sceptre to her. The Queen drew near, touched the sceptre, and her life was saved. The King said to her, "What is thy request? It shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom." At that time the Queen only said, let the King and the prime

minister come to the feast that I have made ready for them.

The King went to the feast, and again asked her request; but the Queen only invited him and the prime minister to another banquet. The prime minister was very proud that the Queen had let no one come with the King to the feast but himself. But as he was passing through the gate of the palace, the good Jew did not bow to him. This spoiled all the prime minister's pleasure, and when he went home, he had a gallows, fifty cubits high, made on which to hang the Jew.

The next day the King came

to the banquet, and brought the prime minister with him. The King again asked the Queen what was her request, and promised to grant it to the half of his kingdom. Then the Queen told her all the wicked prime minister had done, and begged for the life of her people. The King rose up and went out from the feast in great anger. When his servants showed the King the gallows which the prime minister had prepared, he said, "Hang him thereon."

The Queen fell down at the king's feet and besought him with tears to send orders that the

Jews might not be killed. He granted her request, and letters were sent, sealed with the king's ring. The Jew who sat in the palace gate was called into the king's presence. The King put his own ring on the finger of the Jew, he was clothed in royal robes of blue and white, a great crown of gold was set on his head, and he was made next to the King himself. All the Jews had joy, and gladness, and a great feast, instead of mourning, and tears, and death.

This good Queen, by interceding with the King, saved the lives of her whole nation, and enabled

them to spend the rest of their days in peace and happiness.

My friend, have you any one to plead for your life? Perhaps you do not know that you are in danger; perhaps you do not know that you are under sentence of death. If so, I must tell you that you are. You have broken, times without number, the holy laws of the one true God, the great King of heaven and earth. Death is the punishment of disobedience. The Bible, the true Veda, says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

We all have sinned; there is

none righteous. God does not wish us to perish; He wishes us to be holy and happy for ever. God so loved us that He gave His only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to be our Saviour. Jesus Christ became incarnate, and after doing many wonderful works and showing both by His teaching and holy life the way to heaven, suffered a cruel death on our account. He rose from the dead, and afterwards ascended to heaven, where He pleads for every one who trusts in Him. God's Holy Book says, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

Worship the true God alone; do not bow down to idols, the work of men's hands. Ask pardon of your sins in the name of Jesus Christ; receive Him as your Saviour; seek to be purified by His Holy Spirit. You will thus become the adopted son of the great King. He will watch over you here, and at last He will take you to His heavenly palace, where you will be far more glorious than the Jew adorned with royal robes by the King of Persia.

JESUS.

Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.

Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find,
A sweeter sound than Thy blest name,
O Saviour of mankind!

O hope of every contrite heart!
O joy of all the meek!
To those who fall, how kind Thou art!
How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah! this
Nor tongue nor pen can show;
The love of Jesus—what it is,
None but His loved ones know.

Jesus, our only joy be Thou,
As Thou our crown wilt be;
Jesus, be Thou our glory now,
And through eternity.

Printed at the C. K. S. Press, Madras,
No. 18, Church Street, Vepery.